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Science: "Magnificent But Dangerous"

"Rather than pretending to be perfect and ultimate, any scientific theory represents only a stage of progress in successively better approximations," says Warren Weaver in a lecture before the Adult School, Scarsdale, N. Y., published simultaneously in *Science*, Washington, December 13, 1957, and in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 5734 University Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois, December, 1957. Dr. Weaver is vice-president for the Natural and Medical Sciences of the Rockefeller Foundation and is a former president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

"Science is what scientists do . . . , and scientists are human." They differ from other people only in their "schooling in scientific method, their knowledge of the vast successes which science has had, their proud partnership in the profession that has measured the star, split the atom, and probed the cell. This inheritance is, I am bound to tell you, magnificent but dangerous."

Those who began the Royal Society Club in London, out of which came the Royal Society, center of much Western science for almost 300 years, "were men of varied and important affairs," and not "narrow specialists." In our time, "devices that are essentially scientific in character," have made for countless changes in manner of living. But "in the world of living things, the progress of science was not so rapid. . . ." "How complicated is the set of influences that affect behavior?"

In the minds of many, science "has been identified with the more technological aspects of man's conquest of physical nature." "To too great an extent we associate this noble word with the mechanical, deterministic, physical science of 50 years ago. . . .

"Science of today deals with concepts that involve abstractness, imagination, the beauty of conciseness, and at the very core of the subject something which can properly only be called faith."

The average citizen, thinks Dr. Weaver, fears science because he thinks it is mechanistic and depresses "the dignity of the inner man." He does not realize that, as Robert Oppenheimer has said, the citizen should have known that " 'human life was far too broad, deep, subtle, and rich to be exhausted by anything the scientist would find out in his own field.' " And J. Bronowski is quoted: " 'There is a likeness between the creative acts of the mind in art and in science.' "

"I would suggest," writes Dr. Weaver, "that an absolutely critical distinction between science and religion may be that science never will and never can reach the final goal of perfection, whereas religion can do so and has done so. The average citizen tends to think that science has destroyed the element of faith in religion; when he should realize that science is itself founded on faith."

Thus the citizen should learn about science, "so that it can be an exciting intellectual companion and a useful servant." " 'The layman must . . . make his own efforts at understanding,' " Sir Edward V. Appleton is quoted. Sir Edward went on to say that although " 'scientific knowledge is itself neutral,' " decisions concerning the use of science are " 'not for the scientists alone.' " Therefore the scientist must " 'be ready to leave his laboratory to act as a guide.' "

Page 1 Science: "Magnificent But Dangerous"
Page 1 "Marriage" of the Military and Scientists
Page 2 "Science and Human Values"
Page 3 The Mysteries of Science
Page 3 "Return to the Study of Religion"
Page 4 History of Rural Sociological Research
Page 4 Eiconics: a New Science?
Page 5 "What's Ahead in Economic Development?"
Page 5 "We all have mental illness. . . ."
Page 5 Symposium on New Birth-Control Techniques
Page 6 "Our Peculiar Hell"
Page 7 "Personalized Inefficiency"
Page 7 "Comparative Education Review"
Page 7 A Dinner for Hearts
Page 7 "The World Social Situation"

"Marriage" of the Military and Scientists

"Under military patronage, science is flourishing as never before," writes Edward Speyer, a scientist, in *Dissent*, New York, Autumn, 1957, in an article entitled "Scientists in the Bureaucratic Age."

"The 'marriage' of the military machine with the research scientists has, despite initial trepidation on both sides, been unexpectedly happy. Both partners . . . are satisfied. . . . It is largely because of technology and science that the military leaders have come to exercise greater influence in American government and industry than ever before in peace-time." One reason is that "the accelerated rate of scientific advance (which today does not imply historical progress) renders military strategy and equipment obsolete even before it is finally agreed upon."

Certain of the fears expressed have not been of "major significance." The military have permitted scientists to do "basic research" even though what the military wants eventually is application of research to weapons.

"It is the human, social consequences of this marriage,

XUM

first to the scientists as men, and second to society as a whole, that are dangerous."

"Military and industrial preferences have affected the directions in which research is oriented. Medical instrumentation lags because there is not enough money in it. . . . Important work in sociology, psychology, and biology is probably being held up." But the interests of the military are "much broader than anticipated." "The man who pays the piper has been big-hearted about calling the tune, especially since so many tunes develop into hit songs."

But scientists have "aided and abetted" many new emphases. They have accepted "a factory-like conception of scientific work." "Here . . . lies the secret of the felicity of the Amazing Marriage: the scientists have been led, not bludgeoned into new ways; and if science is being misled, it is seduction, not rape."

"In both contemporary America and Russia, groups which are considered important are placed under surveillance. Scientists have become important. The security program has helped to set scientists apart from the humanity which they are pledged to serve."

The Department of Defense requires companies which are awarded "classified contracts" to compel all *civilian* employes to state that they are not in any way associated "with any of the organizations listed." The list is what is ordinarily known as the Attorney General's list of 250 organizations, considered by the Attorney General to have "interests in conflict with those of the United States." A civilian denied clearance becomes "blacklisted." In practice the civilian worker in physics or engineering requires clearance "whether the work is on classified projects or not."

"Science is sometimes mistaken for a very broad, all-inclusive world viewpoint; actually it is a narrow and often restricting way of looking at the world. Scientific work is not of much help in developing a sense of humor or a sense of beauty unless a man is inclined to develop them anyway. The tradition of cultural freedom is generally brought into science from outside; it is likely to be the result of extra-scientific interests of leading scientists. It can and will be eliminated from science if leading scientists lack an ethical and political attachment to it."

"The most ominous portent for science today does not come from government control through subsidization and security regulations, but from the limited horizons of scientists themselves. . . .

"Scientists do not seem able to rise above the vulgar materialism of our times; the danger is more generic. If the scientists continue to think of themselves as scientists first and citizens afterward, they cannot resist the present trends, but are fated to become an important source of strength for reactionary groups who can afford to subsidize them. The role of science in Russia looks ominously like the future toward which American science may be heading."

"The most encouraging fact about American science today is that the majority of the most competent scientists remain in the universities despite the lower salaries." But scientists need a sort of Hippocratic Oath. They also require more political insights and intervention than thus far revealed.

"The scientists cannot do this without placing their salaries, their prestige, and their Amazing Marriage in jeopardy. . . . Paradoxically, the scientists can win the respect to which their talents entitle them only by sacrificing their present respectability."

"Science and Human Values"

"Men have asked for freedom, justice, and respect precisely as the scientific spirit has spread among them. The dilemma of today is not that human values cannot control a mechanical science. It is the other way about: the scientific spirit is more human than the machinery of governments. We have not let either the tolerance or the empiricism of science enter the parochial rules by which we still try to prescribe the behavior of nations. Our conduct as states clings to a code of self-interest which science, like humanity, has long left behind."

These are among the concluding sentences in a series of lectures delivered by J. Bronowski at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and now printed in a book, title above (New York, Julian Messner, 1958. $3.00). Mr. Bronowski is director of the Coal Research Establishment of the British National Coal Board, on leave as Carnegie Visiting Professor at M.I.T. He is also the author of a work on poetry and of a biography of William Blake.

Mr. Bronowski writes: "Dissent is the native activity of the scientist. If that is cut off, what is left will not be a scientist, and I doubt whether it will be a man."

In a statement on "The Creative Mind," Mr. Bronowski makes, among many others, the following statement: "The world today is made, it is powered, by science; and for any man to abdicate an interest in science is to walk with open eyes toward slavery.

"My aim in this essay is to show that the parts of civilization make a whole; to display the links which give society its coherence and, more, which give it life. In particular, I want to show the place of science in the canons of conduct which it has still to perfect.

"There is a likeness between the creative acts of the mind in art and in science. . . . The sense of personal exploration is as urgent, and as delightful, to the practical scientist as to the theoretical. . . . No scientific theory is a collection of facts. It will not even do to call a theory true or false in the simple sense in which every fact is either so or not so. . . . Science finds order and meaning in our experience. . . . It grows from a comparison. . . .

"All the discoveries of science, all works of art, are explorations—more, are explosions, of a hidden likeness. . . . And the great poem and the deep theorem are new to every reader, and yet are his own experiences, because he himself recreates them. They are the marks of unity in variety; and in the instant when the mind seizes this for itself, in art or in science, the heart misses a beat."

Under "The Habit of Truth": "We cannot shirk the historic question, What is truth? On the contrary: the civilization we take pride in took a new strength on the day the question was asked. . . .

"The world which the human mind knows and explores does not survive if it is emptied of thought. And thought does not survive without symbolic concepts. The symbol and the metaphor are as necessary to science as to poetry. . . .

"Is it true that the concepts of science and those of ethics and values belong to different worlds? Is the world of *what is* subject to test, and is the world of what *ought to be* subject to no test? I do not believe so. Such concepts as justice, humanity and the full life have not remained fixed in the last four hundreds years, whatever churchmen and philosophers may pretend. . . .

"All this is plain once it is seen that science also is a system of concepts: the place of experience is to test and correct the concept. . . ."

Under "The Sense of Human Dignity": "My theme is that the values which we accept today as permanent and often as self-evident have grown out of the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution. The arts and the sciences have changed the values of the Middle Ages; and this change has been an enrichment, moving towards what more deeply makes us human beings. . . .

"If we are to study conduct, we must follow it in both directions—into the duties of men, which alone hold a society together, and also into the freedom to act personally which the society must still allow its men. . . .

"The concepts of value are profound and difficult precisely because they do two things at once: they join men into societies and yet preserve them a freedom which makes them single men. . . .

"The society of scientists must be a democracy. It can keep alive and grow only by a constant tension between dissent and respect; between independence from the view of others and tolerance by them. The crux of the ethical problem is to fuse these, the private and the public needs. . . .

"There never was a great scientist who did not make bold guesses, and there never was a bold man whose guesses were not sometimes wild. . . .

"The exploration of the artist is no less truthful and strenuous than that of the scientist. . . . The great artist works as devotedly to uncover the implications of his vision as does the great scientist. They grow, they haunt his thoughts, and their most inspired flash is the end of a lifetime of silent exploration. . . .

"Whether our work is art or science or the daily work of society, it is only the form in which we explore our experience which is different; the need to explore remains the same. That is why, at bottom, the society of scientists is more important than their discoveries. What science has to teach us here is not techniques but its spirit: the irresistible need to explore. . . .

"In a book that I wrote about poetry I said, 'Poetry does not move us to be just or unjust, in itself. It moves us to thoughts in whose light justice and injustice are seen in fearful sharpness of outline.'

"What is true of poetry is true of all creative thought. And what I said then of one value is true of all human values. The values by which we are to survive are not rules for just and unjust conduct, but are those deeper illuminations in whose light justice and injustice, good and evil, means and ends, are seen in fearful sharpness of outline."

The Mysteries of Science

I. Bernard Cohen, Harvard's historian of science, concludes a review of scientific achievements during the past 100 years, in an article, "The Wonderful Century," in *The Atlantic,* Boston, October, 1957, with the following paragraphs:

"The triumphs of modern physics have been of a magnitude without precedent in the history of thought. Thanks to the labors of J. J. Thomson, Rutherford, Bohr, and their pupils, we have penetrated within the atom and we have succeeded in tapping the resources of energy stored in the atomic nucleus. We have even realized the alchemist's dream of changing one type of chemical element into another. But I believe that anyone who appreciates the growth of scientific thought will consider the most interesting aspect of science in our time to be its mysteries. In physics there are the as yet unknown forces that hold the parts of the atomic nucleus together and the question of the meaning and function in the scheme of nature of the rapidly growing number of known cosmic particles. In biology there is still the problem of the basic chemistry of life, and in astronomy the mystery of the outer reaches of space and the creation and destruction of matter.

"There are some among us who envisage a time when all the major questions will be solved. But the history of science to date would rather indicate that as long as the human imagination may contemplate the world of nature, the solution of one problem will aways give rise to another problem of a different sort. The more experiements that we perform, the greater is our respect for the creative mind of man which can invent a 'natural order' to encompass the data of experience in a systematic array. Today it seems clear, as it did to men at the birth of science, that in the pursuit of science, truth is a direction rather than a destination."

"Return to the Study of Religion"

The words above appear in the preface to J. Milton Yinger's book, *Religion, Society and the Individual* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1957. $5.00), with the subtitle, "An Introduction to the Sociology of Religion." The author is professor of sociology and anthropology at Oberlin College.

The text is a comprehensive one. Sociology of religion is regarded as "an attempt to discover general principles concerning the relationship of religion to society." Professor Yinger thinks that the founders of sociology and anthropology did not neglect the study of religion, but despite the excellent beginnings "for a generation it has been fairly remote from the vital concerns of social scientists." "Only among anthropologists . . . has a vigorous interest in religion been consistently maintained."

During the past 10 or 15 years the situation has changed. Not only is there evidence of a "return to religion" among the people but also of "a return to the study of religion" among social scientists. "Many psychologists and sociologists, and at least a few economists, are discovering that the analysis of religion is fundamental to a number of their most significant questions. Empirical studies and interpretative essays are appearing in increasing numbers." This book, Dr. Yinger hopes, "may give some impetus to this development."

Among the chapters are: "The Relation of Religion to Morals, Science, and Magic"; "A Sociological Theory of Religion"; "Religion and Personality"; "Religion and Variation Among Societies"; "Religion and Social Status"; "Religion and Economics"; "Religion and Political Institutions"; "Religious Change and Social Change."

The churches did not lead the movement to reduce racial discrimination and segregation, thinks Dr. Yinger. They gave "substantial attention" forty years after the NAACP and twenty years after the CIO. "It was inevitable that as 'churches' they would not lead. . . ." Now they can affect the pace of the movement.

In a discussion of religion and economics, Dr. Yinger states that "Christianity is a minority movement." Kierkegaards' lament is still heard: "how to find Christians in Christendom." Nevertheless, Christianity "can have an indirect influence on the distribution of economic and political power." Christian motivation "can at least soften some of the harshness of the conflicts. . . ."

"For a church . . . to help to integrate a complex mod-

XUM

ern society is a supremely difficult task; but there has been some reaching out toward this goal which the student of religion, as well as the practitioner, cannot afford to disregard."

History of Rural Sociological Research

After examining 1,600 titles in rural sociological research published in the United States, Edmund de S. Brunner interprets a large representative group of these publications in *Growth of A Science*, with the subtitle, "A Half-Century of Rural Sociological Research in the United States." (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1957. $3.00.) Dr. Brunner analyzes and gives concise critiques, noting not only that the major conclusions were but also the methods used.

A review of the early products, those published prior to the Purnell Act of 1924, which authorized federal grants in aid to the state colleges of agriculture for rural sociological research, is followed by considerations of the varied studies on the community, population, social institutions, social organization, social aspects of economic problems, regionalism, and suburbanism. There has apparently been no research in race relations. The book concludes with a chapter, "Retrospect and Prospect," and a bibliography of studies by American rural sociologists in foreign countries. Dr. Brunner, now chairman of the board of governors, Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, calls attention to a 100-page bibliography of rural sociological work which may be purchased from Professor W. A. Anderson, Cornell University.

Of special value to the person who is not a technician in the discipline are the numerous summaries of findings under various heads. For example, practically all studies of migration and mobility of population indicate, among others:

"The bulk of the rural-urban migration begins at age 16 and is over by age 30," and females leave rural communities earlier than males and in larger numbers.

"Families with a number of organizational contacts in their community are less mobile than those with a few.

"Younger families are more mobile than older, operators of small farms than those with larger holdings."

"The youth of tenant families are more mobile than those of owner families, but they move shorter distances."

"Explanations for the trends mentioned must be attempted with caution." One researcher listed six types of population movement and 29 factors motivating migration.

"Perhaps no other rural social institution has been as much studied as the church." These have usually been "descriptive one-dimensional social photographs of specific situations at a moment of time." Conspicuous for absence is study of "the reciprocal relationships of the local church and religious bureaucracy of its denomination," and of "the effect of leading types of church government or policy upon local units."

As early as 1927, 38 studies of the rural church were listed in a compilation made by the Sage Foundation. "Perhaps the most influential of these early studies—16 all told—were those made under the direction of Warren H. Wilson" between 1912 and 1916 in 12 states. Dr. Wilson, a rural sociologist, was long known as the "dean" of those administering national rural church programs, as he served the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Wilson early stressed regionalism "as of considerable utility to rural sociologists."

Dr. C. O. Gill, of the Federal Council of Churches, and his well-known cousin, Gifford Pinchot, studied churches in Vermont and in Windsor County, New York, and published in 1913 a book, *The Country Church: Decline of Influence and Remedy*. They made a generalization which Dr. Brunner states is confirmed consistently by later studies: In a community with declining population, "church membership drops more rapidly than the population, whereas in a growing community its rate of gain lags behind that of the community."

The numerous later studies "agree markedly, even in details, on many salient features of institutional life of local churches." Among "tested findings" summarized by Dr. Brunner are:

"The lower the density of population the smaller is the proportion of the population associated with the churches. . . .

"The lower the proportion of tenants among farm operators, the higher is the proportion of tenants who are church members.

"The lower the economic level of a community, the greater is the . . . formalized social participation occurring through the church.

"The level of support of both open-country and village churches is positively correlated with such indices as the value of farms, farm income, and per capita retail sales."

Much rural sociological research has been done in agricultural colleges, with administrators interested in immediate results. Dr. Brunner thinks that rural community leaders have often made practical use of the studies. He also believes that rural sociologists are both contributing to basic social research "without regard to immediate practical ends," and also aiding those interested in applied social science, those who are administering programs and organizations and tackling practical problems of people.

Within 50 years the number of professional workers in rural sociology has increased from a small number of persons to about 1,000.

Eiconics: A New Science?

The new science of eiconics "exists, if it exists at all, precariously poised between a number of different stools and in considerable danger of falling between all of them," writes Kenneth Boulding, professor of economics at the University of Michigan, in a book, *The Image* (Ann Arbor, Mich., The University of Michigan Press, 1956. $3.75). Mr. Boulding is interested in "inter-disciplinary cooperation" and conducts a seminar in the Integration of the Social Sciences. He wrote the monograph here reviewed as a result of his experience during a year spent at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, Calif.

"My theory might be called an organic theory of knowledge. Its most fundamental proposition is that knowledge is what somebody or something knows, and that, without a knower, knowledge is an absurdity. Moreover, I argue that the growth of knowledge is the growth of an 'organic' structure."

"It is the purpose of this work, therefore, to discuss the growth of images, both private and public, in individuals, in organizations, in society at large, and even with some trepidation, among the lower forms of life. Only thus can we develop a really adequate theory of behavior."

His science, he states, is not altogether new, and contributions come to it from various disciplines. He says, modestly enough, that economics, which he knows best, has

contributed least. It may be that we are on the threshold "of a profound reorganization of the departmental structure of knowledge and of academic life." Old boundaries are crumbling. "If a single theoretical principle can be shown to apply over a wide area of the empirical world, this is economy in the learning process."

"There are elements in the image which are capable of organizing the life and activity of the individual. It is these organizing elements which constitute faith: the faith of the experimental scientist in his method; the faith of the believer in his God. . . . In our present state of knowledge, however, we must confess that the sources of organizing power are mysterious. Faiths are the genes of society. Their operation is as potent and as mysterious as that of the gene in biology."

"Values are now seen to be just as appropriate a subject of 'scientific inquiry' as facts. This is not to say that values can be validated by scientific inquiry, but then neither can facts be so validated."

Thus the theory of the image offers a restructuring of the universe of knowledge—a single principle which is stated to apply over a wide area. The philosophical implications of the new science are discussed in the final chapter. "It leads in the direction of a broad, eclectic, organic, yet humble epistemology looking for processes of organization rather than specific tests of validity and finding these processes in many areas of life and experience: in art, religion, and in the common experiences of daily life, as well as in science. It is least friendly to those philosophical positions which put all the eggs of truth in one basket of method, whether that of experiment or of revelation. It seeks truth in a way and a life, or, perhaps, in many ways and in many lives."

"What's Ahead in Economic Development?"

Edwin G. Nourse spoke on the topic above at a dinner in New York, October 4, 1957, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the organization of the Department of the Church and Economic Life of the National Council of Churches. "It is easy to rest back on the comfortable assumption that the explosively active development of our technology in the period of war stimulus and postwar prosperity assures us an easy and brilliant epoch of economic development in the years ahead," Dr. Nourse, former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers in the government of the U. S., observed. But "the very dynamism" of our "scientific discoveries and engineering applications" poses problems. "Thus the potentials of technology will confront us with continuous economic choices in the years ahead."

"An economic institution has a soul as well as a body." A particular business organization "may yield quite different results under differing conditions of thinking and practice among members. . . ." Thus what is ahead will be ultimately determined by our morals. Concepts of social responsibility in economic affairs will thus influence the development of economic institutions.

Two major dilemmas were put as follows: "How shall the power and responsibility to administer private resources be divided between big business and big labor, and how shall big government exercise beneficent overall responsibility for promoting maximum continuous production and real consumer purchasing power, while preserving the freedom and dynamism of individuals and groups?"

The collective bargaining process in the United States has been marked by "brawling youth" in the "class struggle." How can social consciousness affect the process? How can we have collective bargaining "in good faith to the worker, to the stockholder, to the consumer, to the economy?"

Words of praise are given to the price policies advocated by the United Automobile Workers, proposing public hearings when price advances are being considered by the corporations producing cars. Thus the public would have some means to judge whether or not a price increase is justified. Dr. Nourse also noted that the Ford Motor Company had shown more willingness to engage in *rapprochement* with the unions in 1955 than in 1957. He commended American Motors for recently setting up "a panel of ten labor economists to advise in the company's . . . wage negotiations." In marked contrast are attitudes of irresponsibility revealed by recent public policies of the Brotherhood of Teamsters.

"We all have mental illness. . . ."

"We all have mental illness of different degrees at different times, and . . . sometimes some of us are much worse or much better," Karl Menninger of Topeka, Kansas, the well known psychiatrist is reported to have stated in a paper read at the second International Congress for Psychiatry, held at Zurich, Switzerland, September, 1957. The quotation is taken from a manuscript furnished by Dr. Menninger. The authors of the paper are Dr. Menninger, Henri Ellenberger, Paul Pruyser and Martin Mayman.

Dr. Menninger observed that many doctors seem to be more concerned with classifying the illnesses of their mental patients than with helping them. Although classification may be a useful tool, there are also potential dangers involved.

The noted physician called for a unified concept of mental illness, asking his brethren "to think of all mental illness as being essentially the same in quality and differing quantitatively." He pleaded that they should "think of the patient, not as one afflicted with a certain disease which they must name and then battle with and attempt to dispel, but rather as a human being, one somewhat isolated from his fellows, one whose relationships with them have become mutually unsatisfactory and disturbing."

To some physicians and to many laymen "mental illness and particularly schizophrenia is a definite specific evil thing which invites the unsuspecting like a fungus or tapeworm. The word schizophrenia becomes a damning designation. To have it once applied to a young man can be to ruin a career despite all evidence of subsequent healthiness."

Symposium on New Birth-Control Techniques

A symposium on research in the development of effective new contraceptives, in which 37 physicians, social workers, social scientists, and clergymen participated, was held in New York, October, 1957, by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. A statement summarizing the discussion of the "medical, moral, and social implications" of the new methods was made by Alan Guttmacher, a physician, director of obstetrics and gynecology at Mt. Sinai Hospital, New York, and a clinical professor of both subjects at the College of Physicians and Surgeons,

XUM

Columbia University. The following is from Dr. Guttmacher's summary:

"Man's attempt to control the occurrence of pregnancy is virtually as old as man himself. The earliest medical documents detail specific techniques, which were in use several thousand years ago. There have been two modern developments. Until about 100 years ago, contraception was the privilege of the elite. During the 19th century, the movement began to democratize contraceptive knowledge in order to make it available to the masses. However, this has been thwarted in large measure by the absence of simple effective methods.

"The second modern development is currently taking place—the emergence of several simple methods of birth control. The need for such new methods has long been apparent to American obstetricians and gynecologists. The techniques which the medical profession have considered standard . . . have proved to be efficient devices, but are so cumbersome as to be unacceptable to a great number of people in our own country, to say nothing of the rest of the world. These methods are being used mainly by highly motivated individuals, living in relatively ideal surroundings.

"For example, a recent study of a national sample of white married couples" with wives aged 18 to 39, "revealed that only 35 per cent use the methods considered standard by the medical profession. Even lower proportions were revealed in two recent studies of low income groups: In a 1953 study of more than 4,000 post-partum clinic patients in Columbus, Ohio, the percentage using standard techniques was 21 per cent; in a 12-city study in 1956 of 590 low-income women, the percentage was 27 per cent. And in a follow-up study of more than 2,000 patients at an English birth-control clinic, it was discovered that 58 per cent stopped using the standard method within two years.

"When this picture is supplemented by the grim facts of explosive population growth in India, Japan, China, Islands of the Caribbean, Mexico, and many of the other underdeveloped countries of the world, it is clear why development of simpler, more acceptable methods has become the concern of the scientific world, particularly scientists in America. Such methods are emerging, some in unfinished form. But the trend is clear."

For example, "Dr. Manuel Paniagua, medical director of the Puerto Rican Family Planning Association, reported on a study, begun in March, 1956, in which 218 women have been given an oral contraceptive, based on a synthetic steroid. They have been instructed to take the tablet daily, starting on the fifth day of the menstrual cycle, for 20 days. No pregnancies have occurred while the medication was taken according to instructions. A sizeable number have reported various unfavorable reactions to the pill. Due to the limited period during which the study has thus far been underway no conclusions can yet be drawn as to possible side effects from long-range usage. Because of the tablet's effectiveness, however, the study is continuing and shows great promise for the future."

Dr. Christopher Tietze of Washington concluded that the new methods show great promise but cannot be rated precisely without further testing. In some cases, more definite results may be available in perhaps another 12 months.

Following the medical reports, a group of sociologists, anthropologists, demographers, and ministers, under the chairmanship of Rabbi David H. Wice of Philadelphia, discussed the moral and spiritual implications of these new and simpler contraceptive techniques.

"The need to give to our young people high motivation for responsible parenthood was stressed, and several speakers brought out the fact that our social and moral thinking has not kept pace with the advancement of science. It was generally felt that these newer methods of contraception would do little to increase promiscuity since the fear of pregnancy is only infrequently a deterrent. In this context, material was cited from the late Dr. Alfred Kinsey's publications. Methods of distribution of the simpler contraceptives were reviewed and discussed.

"It was the consensus of the symposium that some of the newer methods of contraception are about to pass out of the experimental stage and are ready for wide clinical use, while others, most particularly the steroid pill, are too new to be completely evaluated. There seems to be no question as to the effectiveness of the pill in preventing conception, but there was considerable doubt as to its possible long-range effect on the health and well-being of the individual.

"There was a general feeling of optimism and excitement. It was felt by all participants that we are on the threshold of a new era in birth-control. While it is not certain that any of the currently new methods will prove to be the ideal answer, there is no question that they represent a bold step in the right direction. It was felt also that current research will eventually result in a variety of methods—some of them already available—from which couples may choose, depending on physical and emotional factors. It is recognized that a single contraceptive technique cannot be universally applied, because people live so differently and are so differently constituted. If the availability of various new methods is to serve mankind most effectively, the family, the church, the school and mass communications media must accept the challenge of the education of husbands and wives in the most beneficial use of the new methods, and of the preparation of children and young people for responsible parenthood."

"Our Peculiar Hell"

"Twentieth-century man has brought forth his own peculiar hell—the modern one-party dictatorship, inhibited by no law or moral consideration in the exercise of its power, recognizing no private refuge of the individual in its effort to penetrate every sphere of life and to make every object serve its purpose," writes Richard Lowenthal in *Dissent,* New York, Autumn, 1957. The modern total state is declared to be unique, and thus clearly unlike any tyranny of the past. Trotsky's unfinished biography is quoted to the effect that Stalin had revised the famous remark of Louis XIV of France. Stalin could say: "Society —I am society." Mr. Lowenthal believes that the unique nature of modern totalitarianism is being "recognized by a growing number of students of political science, particularly in the United States."

What forces brought into being this terrible institution? Note is taken of the theses that totalitarianism is a dogmatic "secular religion," or that the total state is the logical outcome of the tyranny of revolution of the Jacobin type. Mr. Lowenthal finds "some truth" in these interpretations, but believes that "special conditions" in the modern world explain better the phenomenon that he describes as a hell.

"I believe that the key to the role of totalitarianism in our century is that contemporary civilization has to cope with an unprecedented pace of social changes." Further, Mr. Lowenthal suggests that "we should consider the precariousness of a free society in present-day conditions." "The first thing to note here is that any free society is bound to produce spontaneous, manifold, and uncoordinated change."

"The pace of technical change has constantly accelerated during the last 150 years, and has been even quicker in the latecomer countries than among the pioneers of industrialization." Population changes have broken up old strata in society. Change has taken place at such a rate as to warrant the term upheaval, and the mechanisms of adjustment "have broken down." A degree of despair spreads among the masses, breeding desire for drastic action. Thus "millions of people are prepared to entrust their fate to the advocates of 'total' revolution, to take flight from freedom and to seek salvation in the arms of the omnipotent state."

"The totalitarian regimes are thus not only the result of the problems created by accelerated social change — they are the creators of an alternative method of coping with these problems." Herein are found certain of the justifications advanced by the totalitarians for their horrors. The state, it is said, must suppress freedom and deny justice in order to bring on future benefits to society.

Yet there are, fortunately, "limits to this self-perpetuating hell." "Nazism had insufficient means to achieve its objectives." The maneuverings and abberrations within the Soviet Union these latter years are evidence of improvisations. "The saving grace remains that even the most perfect man-made hell is based on the necessarily imperfect calculations of men."

And how should the free societies avoid this "hell on earth" and prevent a breakdown of civilization? What is required, Mr. Lowenthal submits, is "the adaptation of ideas and institutions to that spontaneous social change" which the free societies constantly generate.

"Our analysis has tended to show that the victories of totalitarianism so far have been due to the failures of free societies to move forward in timely adjustment to the spontaneous changes they have produced. The danger of totalitarian revolution is greatest where the resistance of the ruling groups to ideological and institutional change is most rigid. Our peculiar hell is not, after all, simply the penalty of human hubris trying to achieve the impossible—it is at least as much the penalty of human failure to move forward as far as possible in a changing world. It is not simply the consequence of a refusal to accept the human condition, but at least as much the price of a complacent readiness to accept inhuman but man-made conditions as if they were unalterable and God-given.

"The answer to the totalitarian challenge is not the acceptance of things as they are: it is a sober, non-Utopian, but active faith in our power and duty to preserve our free civilization in the only way it can be preserved—by the unending labor of progress."

"Personalized Inefficiency"

"These new punch-card machines that turn a subscriber into a piece of Swiss cheese are not for us. We believe in old-fashioned, personalized inefficiency. We feel that if the subscriber's copy is going to get loused up, he'd like to know that it is loused up by hand. When visitors see our people scurrying up and down, dropping trays of stencils on the floor, with mice running in and out of the files, it's somehow very heartening."

Thus Stephen Botsford, president of *The New Yorker* is quoted in *Saturday Review*, New York, February 17, 1957. Mr. Botsford also said: "Actually we don't think of subscriptions; we think of subscribers." Bennett Cerf, who put the item into his column, "Trade Winds," says that these remarks at an industry conclave "actually made a few crusty old editors chuckle. . . ."

"Comparative Education Review"

Vol. 1, No. 1 of *Comparative Education Review*, the official organ of the Comparative Education Society, has appeared. (Publication offices at 525 W. 120th St., New York 27, N. Y., and 1227 Fairview Drive, Kent, Ohio.) Three issues a year will be published. The subscription rate is $1.00 a year. Subscription should be sent to the office in Kent. The periodical is planned as "a regular, systematic publication containing up-to-date information and interpretative analysis of educational developments and problems all over the world," and as "a clearing house of basic data and resources for the effective teaching of comparative education in the colleges and universities." The editor is George Z. F. Bereday, Teachers College, Columbia University; the business editor is Gerald Read, Kent State University.

A Dinner for Hearts

At a dinner opening the American Heart Association's annual drive for funds in St. Louis, February 5, Dr. Paul Dudley White said that fatty foods may be an important factor in heart disease. The menu included a salad with oil dressing, turkey with rich dressing and heavy brown gravy, mashed potatoes with butter, pumpkin pie with whipped cream. (United Press report to *New York World Telegram*, February 6, 1957.)

"The World Social Situation"

"The world social situation has significantly improved in vital sectors. . . . There has been a substantial rise in indices of health, food consumption, education, and income. These improvements reflect, in part, the efforts of governments and voluntary organizations . . . as well as the impact of international and bilateral programs of assistance." Thus read portions of the opening sentences in the introduction to *Report on the World Social Situation*, prepared by the staff of the Social Commission of the United Nations (New York, 1957. $1.75). The period covered by the report is "roughly" 1950-55, but there is considerable variation for specific factors and for individual countries." It is the second document of this scope prepared by the Commission, an earlier preliminary statement having been issued in 1952 containing data for 1948-50.

"Mortality rates have continued their decline, particularly in economically less-developed areas. Epidemic diseases which in the past periodically decimated human populations have been brought under increasing control. In the industrially advanced countries, health problems have become more and more those of the intractable degenerative diseases; and the dangers that arise from

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the very nature of the industrial environment, including motor transport accidents, contamination by industrial wastes and radiation, have caused growing concern.

"Food production and consumption have improved on a world-wide basis, although with considerable regional variations. In some of the less-developed countries, pre-war levels of per capita food production may not yet have been recovered, partly because of rapid population growth; recent increases in production, together with imports, loans, and donations from abroad, have been sufficient to eliminate wide-scale famines, which ravaged some areas a few years back; but the problems of chronic malnutrition have not been solved. Meanwhile, several of the most highly industrialized countries have been continuously faced with food surpluses.

"A significantly greater proportion of the children and youth in the world are now attending school, and literacy is advancing up through the age groups. Nevertheless, one half of the world's children of school-going age are still not enrolled in schools. Popular demands for education and national needs for specialized personnel are now increasing more rapidly than the capacity of the school systems. At the same time there is a continuing world-wide debate as to the purposes and functions of education in modern society. Education itself tends to instil a questioning attitude, so that, in general, the higher the national educational level, the more articulate the questioning of the kinds of education now provided.

"National income has risen to new heights, with industrial production growing faster than at any previous period in history. Real wages have gone up in most of the countries for which data are available, although these are largely the developed countries. Consumer prices remained quite stable from mid-1952 until early 1955 or later, particularly in the developed countries, but are again manifesting a definite upward trend in much of the world. Where records have been kept, wage-earning employment has generally increased or has been maintained at high levels; conditions of work have been constantly improved and social benefits have been extended to a widening circle of workers and their families."

Qualifications

"The optimism implied by this general picture of social progress must, however, be qualified:

"1. While progress has been substantial in the fields indicated, it is still small when compared with the vast extent of poverty and need in the world today, and it represents but a fraction of the potential for human progress that now exists. Much more could have been achieved, for example, were it not for a variety of obstacles and competing interests, including political obstacles and competing investments in military defence. Many of the political refugees who posed a social problem in 1950 have now been absorbed, but new bodies of refugees have been created as a result of events in Korea and Viet Nam, as well as Hungary, and the problem of the Palestinian refugees remains unsolved.

"2. The available data on social progress tend, by and large, to give a favorable bias to the world picture. The existence of statistics on social conditions is apt to be associated with efforts to improve these conditions. Where nothing is known, it is more likely that little or no progress has been made.

"3. The varying increases in national income in the less developed countries have been accompanied, in certain instances at least, by a growing unevenness in the distribution of this income within the population, and by a growing dissatisfaction on the part of groups that have not benefited as much from the rising income as they have suffered from the rising prices. Frequently, also, increase in average income on a national basis has meant only that part of the labor force has shifted from rural employment to nominally higher-paid urban employment, without there being any rise in the average individual income in the rural or the urban sector, taken separately. . . . Social programs have widely served to counteract some of the worst effects of uneven income distribution, although in some instances the funds have been chiefly derived from regressive taxation—which falls heavily upon low-income groups—and have been largely absorbed in services available to a limited urban segment of the population.

"4. The progress achieved has been quite uneven in the different fields of development, as well as in the different countries and population groups, and has been characterized by imbalances that may have serious long-range implications. Housing has probably got worse in much of the world because of rapid urbanization, and there is little reason to believe that any substantial advance has generally been made in the prevention of mental illness or of crime and delinquency."

It is also noted that "the increase in national income per capita since before the Second World War has been greater in the already advanced countries than in the economically under-developed countries." But the level of living cannot be judged alone by per capita income. There are other "components" or indicators, but there is at present no satisfactory way of combining these various indicators into one index.

"If the gap in per capita income has widened, the gap in mortality rates has narrowed.

"If the more developed countries have been moving far ahead in their consumption of automobiles, television sets, household appliances, and other products of an advanced industrial economy, the less-developed countries have been drawing closer in their per capita consumption of food calories—as is indeed inevitable if they make any progress at all, since the developed countries have in general already reached or exceeded the optimum level of this particular index."

"Housing is one of a series of urgent problems particularly associated with the explosive growth of cities in economically under-developed areas during recent decades. The population living in large cities in Africa and Asia, for example, has multiplied more than five times in the present century and promises to continue growing at an extremely high rate.

"Urbanization in the economically under-developed regions has been proceeding more rapidly than industrialization. . . . With urbanization . . . there is usually a transfer of poverty and under-employment from the country to the city, and social ills that have been laid to industrialization or to city life are often but an overflow of rural distress.

"The social problems of urbanization must accordingly be considered from a broader point of view than that of the city alone. They are not only problems of assimilation, guidance, stabilization, and specific measures within the city, but also problems of regional planning, rural advancement, the education and training of rural youth, and, in general, of balanced economic and social, rural and urban, development."

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